



BILL FINCH
Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT
MARGARET E. MORTON GOVERNMENT CENTER
999 BROAD STREET
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT 06604
TELEPHONE (203) 576-7201
FAX (203) 576-3913

TESTIMONY OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
TO THE
COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
Thursday, February 5, 2015

S.B. No. 303 AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN EXPOSED TO FAMILY VIOLENCE.

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Joint Committee on Children: Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present testimony in support of SB 303 today.

As Mayor, it's my job to make Bridgeport an even better city every day – a place where our kids and grand kids will choose to live, work, and raise their families. That's why I've made creating jobs today, preparing our kids for the jobs of tomorrow, and bolstering the safety and security of our city for kids and families my top priorities. This change is already happening – we're creating new good paying jobs, more kids have access to high-quality Pre-K programs, and our city is seeing its lowest crime rates in nearly a half century. I'm the father of four kids who were born and raised in Bridgeport. And, I'm proud to say that our city is safer and stronger today than any other time that I can remember. We're proud of the progress being made. But much work remains. We're not complacent. We'll continue working hard every single day to crack down on crime, ensuring that our streets are even safer and more secure tomorrow – for future generations to come.

The establishment of this task force will go a long way in helping to keep our kids and families safe in Bridgeport. Bringing together experts and stakeholders to work collaboratively to address issues of violence has proven to be successful. We have seen this firsthand in Bridgeport with the success of Project Longevity, and the impact it has had on making Bridgeport a safer city for kids and families. Specifically, when it comes to domestic violence, I have proudly supported the establishment of the Center for Family Justice, an organization based in Bridgeport dedicated to breaking the cycle of abuse and violence – domestic, sexual and child – by providing services that restore lives and drive social change through education and community collaboration.

This bill would continue the progress we've made by allowing our state to examine if current policies are as effective as possible in reducing children's exposure to domestic violence, and if they aren't, to determine through evidence-based research how to better protect these kids.

Once again, I'd like to thank the committee for the opportunity to speak in front of you today and would urge our legislature to pass SD 303.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill Finch". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Bill Finch
Mayor